



# GSL Online

Montana's premiere  
student loan  
publication

October, 2006 edition



www.mgslp.org/800-537-7508

## MGSLP LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITES

In September, MGSLP launched two new websites with cooperation from the nation's student loan guaranty agencies. The sites provide a wealth of resources to make college and career planning easier for students and their families. The two websites [www.Going2college.org](http://www.Going2college.org) and <http://prep4highered.org> feature information on resources available in Montana to help students pay and save for college, and plan for postsecondary education. Details about the specific programs and services in Montana are provided by MGSLP and the U.S. Department of Education. "We particularly want to make students aware of the financial, academic and emotional support offered in Montana, which can be the determining factor of whether or not they attend college," says Bruce Marks, Director of the Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program. Other information on the websites include the following:

- College Resource Centers in the Montana
- College Information and Financial Aid Awareness Events
- Assistance provided to low-income, and first-generation college students through programs including Upward Bound, Talent Search, GEAR UP and Project Grad.

[Going2college.org](http://www.Going2college.org) and <http://prep4highered.org> were developed as part of the College Access Initiative, and formalize a foundational role of guaranty agencies in promoting access to postsecondary education.

## FOCUS ON FINANCIAL AID

This month in our Focus on Financial aid we spotlight Lanette Clark, the Financial Aid Director for Fort Peck Community College in Polson. Before officially moving into financial aid,



Lanette worked in admissions for over 14 years as a Placement Officer for FPCC. Distance learning at FPCC has enabled Lanette to further her education. Lanette says distance learning classes at FPCC really help students who may be constrained by either time or location to get a degree. Fort Peck Community College's two-way interactive audio/video systems,

allows students at off-campus sites to participate in credit and non-credit classes. Lanette says a sense of community is what it's all about. "This college is very community oriented, and the atmosphere here encourages staff to further their education and to continue to grow every day. I enjoy working with the students and staff to promote learning and education, which I believe are the keys to a happy, healthy life."

## NEW FACE OF MGSLP

MGSLP welcomes our newest employee Michelle McNiven. Michelle joins the Programs Area as an Outreach Coordinator. Michelle will be visiting high schools state-wide educating students on financial literacy and money management.

## THE DIRECTORS DEN

Each year at about this time, the official Cohort Default Rates are published by the US Department of Education. Montana's overall rate dropped to 5.2%, just barely off the national average of 5.1%. Virtually every school in the state dropped its respective cohort default rate. A huge "congratulations" are in order for a job well done!!

Representatives from MGSLP recently returned from a trip to Washington D.C. where we met with staff from each of our 3 congressional offices and the US Department of Education. Our goal when we visit is to keep the lines of communication open and to make sure the interests of students and schools are kept foremost in the minds of our legislators. We are fortunate in that all of our elected officials are strong supporters of higher education in Montana.

*Bruce Marks, Director*

## FALL TOUR

This month MGSLP participated in the College Fall Tour. The tour is put on by the Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council (MPSEOC) with MGSLP, the Student Assistance Foundation, USBANK, and Wells Fargo as sponsors. Our agency and the other sponsors partnered with MPSEOC to fund \$15,000 in scholarships for seniors attending any college or university in the country. Representatives from colleges and universities all over the country participate in the three-week long tour to meet with students interested in going to college.

## SCHOLARSHIP UPDATE

Greetings everyone –

My favorite season Fall has arrived, and with the arrival of Fall comes fall semester scholarship disbursements. The Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship Program is in its second year and just like last year; everyone is working very hard to allocate scholarship funds to Montana's deserving students. For the current 06-07 academic year, we awarded 458 Governor's Postsecondary Scholarships: 153 "Merit," 55 "Merit-at-Large," and 250 "Need-Based" scholarships.

- The Montana Guaranteed Student Loan Program along with the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education has already disbursed the Governor's Postsecondary Scholarship funds to eligible Montana campuses for the current fall semester. This includes disbursements for the "new" 06-07 recipients and also for students who were awarded scholarships in 2005 and are now eligible for "renewals" for another year.
- The Montana University System Honor Scholarship Program is also in full swing. Application packets are being sent to high school counselors at the 180 eligible high schools in Montana. Completed applications are due in our office by February 5th and awards for the 07-08 academic year will be made sometime in May.

Questions or comments? Contact: Lyndsay Bruno at  
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-Janice Kirkpatrick,  
Scholarship Coordinator